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Judicial Council Announces 2004–2005 Winners of Distinguished Service Awards

San Francisco—The Judicial Council of California has announced the winners of its 2004–2005 Distinguished Service Awards. The awards, the highest honors given by the council, are presented to those who demonstrate extraordinary leadership and make significant contributions to the administration of justice in California.

Now in their 12th year, the awards will be presented during the 2005 Statewide Judicial Branch Conference next week. California Chief Justice Ronald M. George and Administrative Director of the Courts William C. Vickrey will present the awards. The award recipients follow.

Jurist of the Year Award

This award honors members of the judiciary for their extraordinary dedication to the highest principles of the administration of justice.

Justice Patricia Bamattre-Manoukian, of the Court of Appeal, Sixth Appellate District, has contributed significantly to statewide judicial leadership through a wide range of activities in judicial education, community outreach, and other professional projects that have served the courts and public.

Justice Bamattre-Manoukian's work in judicial education has greatly enhanced the knowledge and skills of judicial officers and judicial branch employees throughout the state. In 2003, she coordinated the California Supreme Court's public outreach program in the Sixth Appellate District, one of the most successful events of its kind. Her leadership and comprehensive event summary have been invaluable to other courts in their preparation of similar outreach programs in California.

She also is involved in legal education programs in the community and local schools. For several years, she taught in the Orange County Shortstop Juvenile Justice Diversion Program and has been a teacher and

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lecturer at local high schools, colleges, and bar association seminars. In addition, she has judged moot court competitions in high schools and at Santa Clara Law School and Monterey School of Law (Heisler Moot Court Competition). From 1985 to 1988, she taught trial techniques at Santa Clara University School of Law and has taught at Stanford Law School's "Advocacy Skills Workshop."

A former member of the Judicial Council, Justice Bamattre-Manoukian currently chairs the Appellate Justices Education Committee of the Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER) Governing Committee, as well the Appellate Court Security Committee. She is past chair of the Judicial Council's Probation Services Task Force and the CJER Governing Committee and has served on the council's Administrative Presiding Justices Advisory Committee and the Blue Ribbon Commission on Jury System Improvement. Other achievements include serving as president-elect of the William A. Ingram American Inn of Court and as co-chair of the Santa Clara County Bar Association Appellate Courts Committee.

She was appointed to the Court of Appeal, Sixth Appellate District, in 1989, and served as Acting Administrative Presiding Justice of the court from 2001 to 2003.

Presiding Judge Frederick P. Horn, of the Superior Court of Orange County, has demonstrated leadership and advocacy of access and fairness in the California courts and dedication to excellence in court administration.

As a longtime member and past chair of the Judicial Council's Access and Fairness Advisory Committee, Judge Horn has been instrumental in developing statewide programs that advance the Judicial Council's priorities in this area.

As committee chair from 1998 to 2001, Judge Horn represented the Judicial Council and the committee at numerous state and national meetings and conferences on access issues. Earlier this year, he won the Recognition of National Service Award from the National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness.

In addition, he has been an effective judicial educator, particularly in the area of the Americans With Disabilities Act. Judge Horn developed the concept for *Obstacle Courts*, a training video that focuses on court access for persons with disabilities, and a gender fairness training video produced in 2003. He also was instrumental in drafting the rule of court for requesting accommodations by persons with disabilities, which took effect in 1996.

Under his leadership, the Superior Court of Orange County has established projects that have improved access for persons with disabilities, crime victims, and low-income persons.

An advisory member of the Judicial Council, Judge Horn has chaired the council's Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee since 2002. In addition, Judge Horn serves on the faculty of the B.E. Witkin Judicial College of California, the California Continuing Judicial Studies Program, and the New Judges Orientation Program.

Last March, Judge Horn was elected vice-chair of the Commission on Judicial Performance. In 2000, he was elected assistant presiding judge of the Superior Court of Orange County and two years later was elected presiding judge.

Judicial Administration Award

This award honors individuals in judicial administration for significant contributions to and leadership in their profession.

Jody Patel, Court Executive Officer of the Superior Court of Sacramento County, has demonstrated leadership and advocacy in state court administration and has advanced the goals of the Judicial Council. Ms. Patel has made significant contributions to court administration in California by advancing access, fairness, and diversity; modernization of management and administration; and the quality of justice.

Critical to these efforts has been the creation of a re-engineering and innovation unit within the court to improve all court operations practices and procedures, as well as the establishment of a countywide charter for all criminal justice agencies within the county to improve the delivery of services to the community and the local bar, saving time and resources for both the court and local criminal justices agencies.

Before joining the court in 2001, Ms. Patel served as a deputy director for the State Board of Control, and was instrumental in working with the judiciary and the Legislature toward assisting the state's crime victim population by evaluating their needs and working to improve the responsiveness of the court system, especially the imposition and collection of restitution fines and orders. These efforts have benefited thousands of crime victims.

Under Ms. Patel's leadership, the superior court has worked to improve technology by actively participating in the development of the California Case Management System with the superior courts in Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, San Diego, and Alameda Counties. The court will also serve as a pilot court for the use of the Courts Human Resource Information System.

Ms. Patel has served on the Judicial Council's Court Executives Advisory Committee, the Judicial Branch Budget Advisory Committee, the Trial Court Budget Working Group, the California Case Management System Steering Committee, and the Task Force on Judicial Ethics Issues.

Karen Thorson, Director of the Education Division/Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER) of the Administrative Office of the Courts, has shown leadership in spearheading and developing new approaches to the design, development, and delivery of education for the trial and appellate courts.

Under her leadership, Education Division staff have worked with more than 20 education committees, representing judges and court personnel, to identify educational needs and develop a series of curriculum designs for numerous target audiences. This curriculum initiative, which includes entry, experienced, and advanced levels of content, will revolutionize how educational needs are identified, how education is developed and delivered, and how that education is evaluated and enhanced.

In addition, she has led the division in establishing and enhancing numerous distance education alternatives to supplement and complement existing seminars and conferences. Included is the creation of a broadcast system with more than 200 downlink sites in California courts, which brings live, interactive training to judges and court personnel, and a continually expanding series of online courses addressing a wide variety of content areas.

She has been instrumental in extending the services and expertise of the Education Division not only to the other divisions of the Administrative Office of the Courts but throughout the judicial branch. Because of her leadership, the Education Division/CJER is far more effective in meeting its goals and objectives, more engaged in the work of the Administrative Office of the Courts and the judicial branch, and more essential to the work of the Judicial Council in enhancing the administration of justice.

Prior to joining the California AOC in 2000, Ms. Thorson directed the Education Service Division for the Arizona Supreme Court and the Arizona Administrative Office of the Courts, from which she received the 1999 Distinguished Service Award for judicial administration. She was the key organizer for the 1999 National Symposium on the Future of Judicial Branch Education and has provided assistance to more than 20 states regarding various aspects of judicial branch education. She was the recipient of the 2002 Warren E. Burger Award from the National Center for State Courts.

Bernard E. Witkin Award

This award honors individuals other than members of the judiciary for their outstanding contributions to the courts of California.

Alba Witkin is the widow of Bernard E. Witkin, legal scholar and author of the 35-volume Witkin treatises on California law. Mrs. Witkin was selected for this award for her continued support of judicial and legal education and for continuing her husband's work in the judicial branch.

In 1982, Mr. and Mrs. Witkin together established a charitable fund, called the Foundation for Judicial Education, dedicated to the improvement of social justice and society. Following Mr. Witkin's death in 1995, Mrs. Witkin has carried on this charitable work.

In recent years, the health, education, and enrichment needs of children have become special concerns of Mrs. Witkin. In addition to her philanthropic work, she has served on the boards of the University of California Friends of the Botanical Garden, the University YWCA, and the National Peace Garden in Washington, D.C.

Born in New Jersey, she moved with her family to California in 1929. She received her bachelor's degree from Fresno State College and a master's degree in public personnel administration from Stanford University. After graduation, she worked with the American Friends Service Committee (Quakers) on the relocation of Japanese-American college students from the World War II West Coast internment camps to eastern and midwestern colleges. This formative experience with Quakerism, conscientious objection, nonviolence, and peace instilled a lifetime devotion to these ideals.

Mrs. Witkin was twice elected to the Sacramento School Board and has held elective and appointive offices with many community organizations including the Governor's Conference on Juvenile Delinquency, the City/County Human Relations Commission, the Blue Ribbon Committee for the Revision of the County Charter, the Sacramento Civil Service Board, Sacramento League of Women Voters (also serving as the league's legislative advocate in the early 1950s), the Sacramento YWCA, the Community Welfare Council, and the Sacramento Peace Center.

In 1964, Mrs. Witkin was appointed to the California Advisory Committee of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. The commission was established in 1957 to investigate alleged deprivations of the right to vote on the basis of color, race, religion, or national origin; to study denials of equal protection under the U.S. Constitution; to appraise the laws and politics of the federal government with respect to equal protection; and to report findings and recommendations to the President and Congress.

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The Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. The Administrative Office of the Courts carries out the official actions of the council and ensures leadership and excellence in court administration.